

# Resources for Planning Your Travel

Travel in the United States doesn't have to be expensive! You can see some great sights and still save money if you choose your transportation and accommodation wisely. Here are some helpful websites:

## GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

- ▶ Geography and Travel (<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/travel/travel.htm>) – guide to key sites and features of the United States
- ▶ SeeAmerica.org – a portal to the major U.S. travel websites
- ▶ Fodors.com, Frommers.com, LonelyPlanet.com, Virtualtourist.com – worldwide travel guides
- ▶ Travelocity.com, Expedia.com, Orbitz.com – airline tickets, hotels, cars, vacations & cruises
- ▶ HiddenAmerica.com – an “off-the-beaten path turn on the information highway”
- ▶ Citysearch.com – city guide to entertainment, restaurants, events, hotels, movies and businesses
- ▶ Bulgarian Embassy in Washington, DC <http://www.bulgaria-embassy.org/>

## ATTRACTIONS/THINGS TO DO

- ▶ Recreation.gov – Recreation.gov is a partnership among various agencies aimed at providing a single, easy-to-use website with information about public recreation areas. The site can be searched for recreation areas by state, by recreational activity, by agency, or by map.
- ▶ ThemeParks.About.com – information and reviews about theme parks and amusement parks

## TRANSPORTATION

- ▶ RandMcNally.com, MapQuest.com – maps, driving directions, planning a trip
- ▶ Amtrak.com – train travel
- ▶ Greyhound.com, PeterPanBus.com – bus travel

## HOTELS & MOTELS

- ▶ All-Hotels.com – travel, hotels, discount hotel reservations and lodging
- ▶ MagazineUSA.com – travel guide about the United States
- ▶ BudgetHotels.com – online reservations for hotels and motels
- ▶ Motel6.com, Super8.com – inexpensive hotel chains

## ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION

- ▶ YMCA.net – Young Men's Christian Association
- ▶ www.YWCA.org – Young Women's Christian Association
- ▶ Hostelling International – USA ([hiayh.org](http://hiayh.org)) the Hostelling International network in the U.S.
- ▶ Bed and Breakfast Inns – [bbonline.com](http://bbonline.com)
- ▶ HomeExchange.com – international home exchange and home swap service
- ▶ GoCampingAmerica.com – official website of the non-profit National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds (ARVC), the trade association representing the commercial RV park and campground industry throughout the United States
- ▶ DudeRanches.com – resource for dude and guest ranches across North America

## WEATHER AND CONVERSION TOOLS

- ▶ Weather.com – National Weather Service ([nws.noaa.gov](http://nws.noaa.gov))
- ▶ Exchange Rate Conversion ([www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com))
- ▶ Interactive Units Converter ([sciencemadesimple.com/conversions.html](http://sciencemadesimple.com/conversions.html)) measurements available for conversions include weight and mass, distance and length, capacity and volume, speed, and temperature

## Students share their stories...

### Десислава Ванева



Прекарах лято 2006 в Wyoming, град Thermopolis. Заминах с двама мои приятели и си прекарахме страхотно.

Аз се върнах там за втори път, но определено този път беше по-

вълнуващо. Пак успях да поработя и да спестя за следващия семестър, но и време за забавление имаше. За първи път играх боулинг, плавах на яхта, празнувах 4 юли, бях в ирландски бар, видях бизони отблизо в "Йелоустоун Парк" и посетих много места.

А най-важното от цялото ми пътуване беше, че се запознах с много нови хора и сега говоря английски език много по-добре от преди.

Станах самостоятелна, по-уверена и съм готова за нови предизвикателства!

### Anna Marinova



My name is Anna Marinova and I was a participant in the Work & Travel Program in the summer of 2006.

I'd like to express my great delight with this wonderful program. Now, upon my return to Bulgaria, I realize how much I have changed after these summer months – and only for the better.

My host company was located on a beautiful private island in Ohio and I was happy to be part of a great team from all over the world.

All the students who were there were very kind and it was so interesting for me to learn about each of their countries! I told everyone about Bulgaria, too, and I met wonderful friends. I didn't know for example that there was a Polish traditional dessert – the so-called chlodnik – which is a chilled beet or fruit soup. My roommate, who was a Polish girl, showed me this meal and it became one of our favorites in the hot summer days.

My position in the company was as a housekeeper and, later on, a waitress. I had the chance to deal with many people and improve my English skills. I do not want my future career to be as a housekeeper or a waitress, but what I did during the summer helped me a lot to learn the successful way to deal with customers. For example, I now have an idea of how much can a smile and positive attitude change a situation. Also I didn't have the chance so far to speak in English so intensively, and now after the summer months I realize that my English is much better. In Bulgaria this is very important because I know that English proficiency is one of the criteria for having a successful career. My managers were very nice, too. They tried to make our stay in the country as good as they could and really took care of all of us, planning parties during our days off and taking us on different excursions. I had the chance to visit places that I had only dreamt of – I saw New York City, Niagara Falls and Cleveland, took a lot of photos and had the greatest time!

My summer in the USA was just unbelievable! My mom said that I look grown up and more self-confident and I think she's right! She is very glad I had this chance to take part in such a program and I do think that everybody has to have this chance!

In conclusion I would like to say "Thank You" to all the organizations that made this program possible!

## Students share their stories...

### Pavla Dimova



The Work and Travel program gave me the opportunity to meet my second family in the USA.

I had so many moments full of joy and pleasure I think I became more responsible and I changed my way of thinking regarding work. I mean that I learned how to work hard, how to please my employer and how to smile. This was one of the best experiences that I have had in my life. I met my best friend in the USA and even though she is now back in Lithuania, and I am in Bulgaria, we still write e-mails to each other, we still talk on the phone, and we still visit each other. I cannot say anything negative, all my memories are full of joy.

### Ваня Цуцуманова:

Да работиш в САЩ през лятото е като да прекараш лятото при баба си – забавляваш се с нови приятели, поработваш по-малко, пътуваш... Понякога домаът започва да ти липсва, доскучаваш ти или се разболяваш, уморяваш се от престоя си. Но в края на лятото, когато е дошло времето да си ходиш, зад теб остават само приятни спомени и приятели за цял живот. Надяваш се да можеш да се върнеш пак следващото лято и да преживееш всичко отново.

Да се срещнеш с хора от различни култури и с различно възпитание е винаги предизвикателство... Е, през програмата W&T това идва малко в повече. Най-ценния урок който получих през времето прекарано в САЩ на студентска бригада е

да бъда толерантна и да се науча да приемам хората такива каквито са, а не такива каквито аз бих искала да бъдат.

От всички места които посетих, Ниагарският водопад ме впечатли най-силно. Е, и в Седър Пойнт, Охайо беше забавно. От градовете бих препоръчала Чикаго, въпреки че Ню Йорк и Атлантис сити не са за пренебрегване. И все пак, където и да отидеш, най-важно е компанията с която си. Успях да спестя и пари, даже не малко!

Моят съвет към участниците е да използват този шанс максимално; да пътуват колкото се може по-вече; да се срещат с нови хора; да вземат всичко което могат от програмата!

Дали това преживяване ме промени? Да, наистина ме промени. Станах по-отговорна, по-толерантна, по-търпелива и внимателна с хората. Сега знам каква е цената на познанието и опита в живота като цяло.

### Martin Petkov:



It all began on a sunny fall day last November. I remember somebody saying: "I just got back from a Work and Travel program in Alaska." From that moment on

everything got out of hand. I knew I had to go. I signed up for the program, I got the visa, I got the ticket and I packed my suitcases. The thing that followed was an incredible combination of meeting cool people, having fun, practicing English, traveling all around and of course working.

I basically got the chance to see the way people from all around the globe think. And to learn about their culture and traditions, their

## Students share their stories...

ideas, their life. That's quite an amazing experience for me. I made some friends that I will never forget. And that's a thing that money cannot buy. That's why there is no need of trying to calculate and figure out how much money you have earned. I mean let's face it you cannot put a price on all the delightful memories you now have.

Things like the Northern Lights, moose, bears and the fact that you can enjoy some midnight sunbeams are only compared to the marvelous trip to Hawaii that you can easily go on during the last month of your stay in the USA. And there is just so much more out there waiting to be seen.

And of course after it's all over you sit back at home and realize that you've changed quite a bit. But it's all good. Actually it would have been odd not to change. That's because now that you've seen all those different places and people you just gain a new view of life.

The overall experience was awesome. However, I'd only recommend it to people who just love having a great time.

### Georgi Petkov:



Well, if I have to describe the Work and Travel program I will just do it in one single sentence- a great

chance for each student which should not be missed. I found out about the program from a friend of mine.

One day we were just talking and she told me about the student exchange program. At first, I was a little scared to spend 4 months away from Bulgaria. But after a few days I decided that this was a great chance for me to visit places I had only watched on the TV. So I decided to go for it! I enrolled for the program and started searching for a job offer with a U.S. employer. That took me a lot of time- almost 5 months. Then I got in touch with a pool

management company which was looking for lifeguards. They had a company representative in Bulgaria and I appeared for a personal interview. He found me suitable for the job and signed the much desired contract with me. That was one of the happiest moments in my life!!! Then I had to wait for another 2 months for the work permit and the J1 visa to be ready. And ... the big day came- my flight to the USA!!! When I arrived in the States (at Dulles International Airport-Washington DC) I was very confused- there were a lot of people around and the airport was huge. This state continued for the first couple of weeks. Everything which surrounded me was totally different from Bulgaria. After the first month I got used to my job and began to find it very suitable for me. I learnt one very important thing- how to work with people. This helps a lot in life. Another handy experience that the program teaches you is how to cope with difficult situations. Making money is not the most important thing but if you work really hard and find a second job you will be able to save a good amount.

My advice to everybody who wishes to participate in the Work and Travel program is not to be afraid of the unknown and try because they will not have a second chance to take part. The USA is a great country- just go and find out by yourself!

## Thinking of Graduate School? Study in the United States!

After your summer in the United States, you'll return to Bulgaria to finish your education. But have you considered study in the U.S.? The U.S. welcomes foreign graduate students and strives to make the process as easy and transparent as possible.

Under the auspices of the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange, also known as the Fulbright Commission, we've set up educational advising centers throughout Bulgaria to help interested students like you. The main center in Sofia offers information and guidance on educational opportunities in the U.S., admission procedures at U.S. universities, financial aid, paper-based and computer-based testing, language training, and of course, information on how to apply for the prestigious Fulbright scholarship. There are regular individual and group advising sessions from Monday through Friday. Not in Sofia? Not a problem. Smaller advising centers are scattered around Bulgaria. Just contact the closest advising center for hours of operation.

### FULBRIGHT INFORMATION CENTERS

Web: [www.fulbright.bg](http://www.fulbright.bg)

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